



ROCK RAIDERS

PSX DESIGN DOCUMENT

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ROCK RAIDERS

PLAYSTATION DESIGN DOCUMENT V1.1 – 23-04-99





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GLOBAL CONCEPT SUMMARY

LEGO System Rock Raiders will form the first batch of models to appear as part of the brand new LEGO System Underground theme. The inspiration for LEGO System Rock Raiders is a subterranean universe where brave mini-figures and giant drilling machines toil in extreme conditions to mine for precious energy crystals.

LEGO Media and LEGO Play Materials have collaborated at every stage of the concept development and will simultaneously deliver a range of products to the market place. This places Rock Raiders in a unique position within the LEGO Group as this is the first time in the company's history that multiple products have been derived from a single concept, benefiting from a unified marketing campaign.

Planned products include Rock Raiders models, PC CD-ROM and PlayStation games, puzzle books and comics.

LAUNCH DATE

The global launch date of the new LEGO System Underground theme is September 1999.



ROCK RAIDERS UNIVERSE

Deep space, sometime in the near future...

The enormous geological survey ship LMS Explorer and its crew of Rock Raiders are returning home to LEGO World after a long expedition through the outer rim of the galaxy. Everything is going fine... until the vessel accidentally enters a giant asteroid field! The crew fights valiantly to guide the Explorer through the deadly tumbling rocks, but the endless bombardment against the ship's hull has put the shield integrity in a critical condition.

Now disaster strikes again as the Explorer is sucked inexorably towards a vast wormhole nestling at the centre of the asteroid field. With the ship low on power and listing badly, there is little the crew can do but accept their fate and hang on!

Miraculously the badly-damaged ship, now running on emergency power, emerges from the wormhole intact. However, the crew's initial relief soon turns to dismay as they realise that the wormhole has flung them right across the universe and into the heart of a distant alien galaxy!

Unperturbed, the captain sets a course for the nearest planet, gambling that the emergency power will hold out long enough for them to get there safely. Time is of the essence: if the Rock Raiders are to stand any chance of getting home, they must make emergency repairs to the LMS Explorer and, more importantly, replenish the ship's depleted stock of power crystals.

As the Explorer goes into orbit around the strange alien world, a geological scan reveals rich seams of power crystals beneath the planet's surface – but can the sensors be trusted? The only way to find out is to send in the Rock Raiders!



GAME OBJECTIVE

The player's overall objective is to mine for the precious power crystals that the Rock Raiders need to re-energise the engines of the LMS Explorer and return home. Power crystals are a well-recognised 'commodity' within various LEGO System themes and children recognise and understand their value in relation to LEGO games.

During the game the player will take direct control of various vehicles (which remain consistent with the models available in the Rock Raiders toy range), selecting the most appropriate vehicle(s) for a given mission objective. For example, while the fast and manoeuvrable Hoverboard is great for scouting tunnels and caverns, players will have to switch to the sturdy Loaderdozer to crash through obstacles!



EMPHASIS CHANGE FROM PC TO PLAYSTATION

Although the original intention was for the PC and PlayStation versions of Rock Raiders to be identical, LEGO Media International and Data Design Interactive have since decided to make the two versions distinct. That said, both versions of Rock Raiders have the following in common...

- The universe description, storyline, characters and overall look and feel.
- The Play Materials featured.
- The player's overall objective.

The PC version of Rock Raiders can be summarised as...

- Real-time strategy game, akin to Starcraft and Command & Conquer.
- Player controls the game by using a mouse to click on units and moving them by clicking elsewhere (player has 'god'-like control over units).
- The Rock Raiders and their vehicles have a degree of computer-guided autonomy, so the player can have several units moving and acting simultaneously.
- Player manages resources (ore and power crystals collected) to build new buildings and vehicles.
- Player wins each level by fulfilling certain criteria, i.e. finding a specific amount of ore and crystals and building a specific number of buildings.

The PlayStation version of Rock Raiders, on the other hand, can be summarised as...

- Action game, loosely similar to BlastCorps on N64.
- Player controls vehicles directly using the joypad (player is effectively 'driving' the vehicles).
- Player swaps between vehicles and uses their unique abilities to overcome obstacles in the way.
- Player can only control one vehicle at a time.
- Player wins each level by achieving certain goals – these will change from level to level.
- Example missions: the player has to find and rescue a specific number of raider within a time limit; the player has to outrun a cascading lava flow; the player has to defend the base from rock monster attack.
- Unique two-player 'cooperative play' mode, complete with specially-designed missions.

It's important to stress that the changes to the PlayStation version have not come about due to any technical problems trying to port the PC game across. Rather, it's believed that the proposed in this document is better suited to the console – traditionally, PC strategy games have not translated well to the PSX (partly because of the difficulty replicating mouse control on a joypad) but, more importantly, they don't have the same appeal to the machine's core market who typically prefer fast, arcade-style action.

GAME ENGINE



LEGO Rock Raiders is set in a real-time 3D polygon-based environment. The 3D meshes that make up each of the levels can undulate wildly and the different texture maps overlaying them allow for a wide range of terrain types, including lava, ice, water and rock.



The differing terrains not only increase the game's visual richness but also add depth of gameplay. Each Rock Raiders vehicle has specific physics code and exhibits unique handling, giving a very enjoyable control experience. In addition, the handling changes subtly depending on the terrain being traversed.

The Sony PlayStation platform's advanced graphics capabilities will enable us to achieve strong visual effects and gameplay as it has been designed purely with real-time 3D in mind and has excellent additional capabilities, such as lighting and sound.

LIGHTING EFFECTS

Dynamic lighting, fog and other transparency effects will be employed to enhance the look of the game. In addition, animating textures will be used to bring areas of water and lava to life.

SOUND

XM music and XA audio will be used to enhance the atmosphere of the game. We also hope to incorporate Surround Sound into the XM music player if the libraries allow this to be done (there was mention that this would be the case at the last DevCon).

CAMERA VIEWS

As the player explores each level the camera's built-in AI automatically and intelligently rotates the player's view to provide the best visual experience and eliminate the need to falsely remove near-side walls that could otherwise



block views. This freedom will allow us to create a more realistic playing environment without having to make compromises to graphics or game-play. As the camera moves, it glides smoothly from one position to the next.

When a vehicle is moving slowly the camera zooms in, and then zooms out to show more of the map area as the vehicle's speed increases. The camera will always 'looks ahead' of the direction that the unit is facing, so more of the area the player is moving into is visible. The faster a vehicle moves the further 'ahead' the camera looks, but never so far that the vehicle is not fully visible.

If the route ahead is blocked (e.g. the player tries to drive or drill into a cave wall) the camera will zoom in and its angle tilt down from overhead to a lower (approx. 45°) view . It will zoom out and up again as the direction ahead opens up. Similarly, when a Rock Raider is travelling on foot the camera tilts down slightly from overhead to more of a 45° view.

In the two-player mode the camera will always point dead centre between the two player's Rock Raider units, in a manner akin to the old Atari coin-op Gauntlet.

GAME STRUCTURE & DESIGN

ONE-PLAYER GAME

The one-player game will consist of over twenty action-packed levels or missions, unfolding a thrilling story leading from the Rock Raiders' first tentative explorations of the alien planet's subterranean depths, through their first encounters with alien lifeforms, and finally to the establishing of a fully-functioning base.

The first few missions will act as tutorial levels, introducing the player to the various vehicles one by one so that they can learn how they behave. Subsequent missions will gradually introduce some of the more hostile elements of the Rock Raiders world, such as Rock Monsters and lava streams, and add further complication by requiring the player to juggle the use of two, three, four or even more vehicles to achieve their mission objectives. The levels will range in style, complexity and pace, but all will be structured so that they all build upon skills learnt in previous levels.

Mission Briefing

Each mission begins with a briefing from Chief, the leader of the Rock Raiders, on the bridge of the LMS Explorer. A holographic display will illustrate the mission objectives via a combination of text and graphics, and there will also be a spoken mission briefing from Chief himself (which will basically repeat what's written on the holo-display).

Once the player has digested the objectives (which can also be brought up any time during the mission if forgotten), the holo-display disappears to reveal the Rock Raiders team engaged in their duties on the bridge. The player is free to choose any one of the team, who is then beamed down to the surface and the mission begins.



Mission Content

The player will typically start in a small cave or cavern, often with a vehicle conveniently located nearby (although the obvious choice may not always be the right one to complete the mission successfully!). Each level will comprise some of the following elements:

- Tunnels linking large and small caverns together, forming labyrinth-like mazes.
- Four types of rock:
 - Loose soil – Easy to dig through whether the Rock Raider is on foot or in a drilling machine.
 - Soft rock – Harder to dig through; drilling machine's are recommended!
 - Hard rock – Cannot be dug through; needs to be 'blasted' with dynamite.
 - Impenetrable rock – Cannot be dug through at all!
- Natural obstructions:
 - Lava flows – Hazardous to anything that comes into contact; cunning players will find ways to bridge seemingly impossible rivers of lava in order to reach bonus crystals!
 - Underground rivers - Vary from babbling brooks to raging torrents that only the most skilful of players will successfully cross.
 - Underground lakes and pools – Have to find ways across or around.
 - Ice – No problem for the large drilling unit with its heavy-grip tyres, but other vehicles may slip and slide.
- Alien creatures:
 - Rock monsters (and their cousins, Lava and Ice monsters) – Dangerous even to those in a vehicle.
 - Scabby scavengers – Dangerous when encountered in large numbers.
 - Scorpions, snakes, spiders and bats – Pose a serious threat to any Rock Raiders on foot.

Limited time will be a key motivating factor in the majority of the missions, adding tension and providing an arcade-style feel to the gameplay. The time limiting factor can be implemented in a number of ways: forced screen scrolls caused by the movement of molten lava or rushing water, where a player must escape destruction by staying ahead and reaching safe ground; or by triggered events where a player must achieve specific goals before disaster such as reinforcing walls to prevent cave-ins or moving explosive equipment away from an earthquake zone before the next quake!

Teleport Pads

As the player explores the underground world, he will often find deactivated teleport pads which can be powered up by simply touching them. These then act as 'continue points' – if the player has to retry the mission, they start from the last activated teleport pad.



Failing a Mission

Should a Rock Raider fail a mission, either by taking too much damage or by not completing the mission objectives in the set time, they will be beamed back to the Explorer and sent on enforced R&R leave. The player can now attempt the mission again, using any of the remaining active Rock Raiders. If the player fails the mission five times (i.e. they 'use up' all the active Rock Raiders), then the game ends. Depending on the game's difficulty level, Rock Raiders on R&R leave could be unavailable for a subsequent one or two missions.

Winning Medals

The player's success in a mission will be judged on several criteria, primarily things like time taken to complete it, any trapped Rock Raiders/vehicles rescued and energy crystals found. If players perform exceptionally and, for example, find 50% more crystals than required to complete the mission they may earn a Silver or, if they do even better, a Gold Medal.

Earning Silver medals on all the missions will open up a special 'bonus' level, while getting Gold medals on all missions will open up a second extra-special 'bonus' level. (Note that the player can replay any mission previously completed as many times as they like to earn these medals.)

TWO-PLAYER GAME

In the two-player game each player controls a Rock Raider and plays on the same screen, in the same manner as the Atari coin-op Gauntlet. The emphasis will be on cooperation, with each player helping the other achieve the mission objectives. For example, one player may jump in a drilling machine and hunt for crystals while the other takes care of the marauding hordes of Rock Monsters.

Although the two-player missions will have similar objectives to those in the one-player game, they will be specially designed to offer the best multi-player experience. The precise number of two-player missions has yet to be finalised.

ROCK RAIDERS TEAM

There are six different Rock Raiders. Chief, the captain of the LMS Explorer, provides the mission briefings while the other five – Jet, Axle, Sparks, Doc and Bandit – can be selected for play before each mission. The differences between each Rock Raider are more than cosmetic; each has different abilities which affect the gameplay. While it's possible to complete any mission with any team member, some will be easier if you choose wisely. Learning which abilities will be of more use for a mission will, along with the medal incentive, add to the game's longevity.

Movement

Each Rock Raider while on foot can run, jump and carry items (e.g. energy crystals). While 'jumping' the Rock Raider is still controllable with the direction keys, and the longer the jump button is held down the higher and longer the jump is.



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Special Abilities

Each of the Rock Raiders team has a special ability to help them complete each mission:



Name: Docs

Job: Geologist

Ability: Radar always on full display (no need for maps)



Name: Sparks

Job: Engineer

Ability: Vehicles repair themselves when he's driving them.



Name: Axle

Job: Driver

Ability: Vehicles can take extra damage and go faster



Name: Bandit

Job: Sailor

Ability: Able to swim and makes sailing craft go faster.



Name: Jet

Job: Pilot

Ability: Possesses short burst jet pack – can leap obstacles others can't.

Equipment

Each Rock Raider can find and use various pieces of equipment to clear paths and defend themselves with:

- Dynamite – Once dropped onto the floor, there's a visible count down from 9 to 0 (numbers drift up from the stick and fade away) then an explosion; can blast through hard rock that the diggers can't drill through, and the explosion will also scare away most of the lesser monsters.
- Super Dynamite – Found in key locations (selected by level designer) and cannot be moved; triggered by the player touching it; massive blast radius over multiple blocks; Rock Raider must take cover to avoid blast (akin to Bomberman – indeed, the idea is for 'puzzle' sections similar to that game's, with positioned Super Dynamite to set off and impenetrable blocks to hide behind).



- Pusher Gun – Can be fired in eight directions; emits a 'sonic pulse' which can push monsters back in small steps; repeatedly 'pushing' a monster will eventually scare it off; the 'pulse' takes time to reach its target so it can be dodged; 'pushing' Rock Monsters into lava is a good way of getting rid of them!
- Freezer Gun – Can be fired in eight directions; 'freezes' a monster for a set 'short' time period, though it eventually 'defrosts' and continues its assault; especially useful against Lava Monsters!

Collectibles

Rock Raiders may find useful objects (or 'collectibles') that occur naturally or have been left behind by previous explorers. Some collectibles can also be picked up by driving your vehicle over them, but the more precious ones, like energy crystals, have to be carefully picked by hand, adding variety to the gameplay as the player is forced to enter the more vulnerable 'on foot' mode

Examples of planned collectibles are...

- Freezer guns fuel.
- Pusher guns rechargers.
- Sticks of dynamite.
- Crystals – give the player power.
- Special crystals – award bonus points.
- Map – Shown in the radar, there are four map pieces on each mission/level to find.

Collectibles can be found floating in mid-air, so the Rock Raider will have to jump to collect them. They can also 'drift' or bounce away so the Rock Raider has to run to catch them before they drift off-screen and are lost.

VEHICLES

The player has a wide range of excavation vehicles they can commandeer during the course of the game, which are outline below:

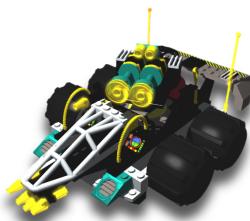


Hoverboard

Can hover over most surfaces including rock, water and lava. As it is very light and hovers just one foot off the ground it is very susceptible to water waves or attack from enemies such as Lava Monsters.

Large Catamaran (picture????)

Sails on the water and can be used to transport small vehicles, such as the small truck or the small digger.



Large Mobile Laser Platform

This can laser through soft, medium and hard rock very quickly. Should the laser be fired upon a monster it will receive an electric shock and the monster will run away.

**Loader Dozer**

Can be used to bash into rock at high speed. It can also shovel up large amounts of earth to use to fill crevices or build islands across water.

**Tunnel Transport**

Can be used to transport men, crystals, ore, even a small truck or digger. It will land, take-off and fly under player control. In addition it can carry and drop water skimmed off lake in its belly scoop, which is useful for dropping on Lava Monsters and halting their advance, or for dropping on lava lakes and forming make-shift bridges.

A Tunnel Transport without a load can fly anywhere on the map, but while it has a load the 'cargo' dangles in the troughs of the tunnels and restricts the helicopters movement to travelling along a tunnel. The player has to be careful not to smash the cargo into the tunnel walls or risk destroying it.

**Rapid Rider**

A small catamaran which can transport a RockRaider and has a small storage area to carry crystals.

**Small Digger**

Useful for digging soft soil and transporting crystals. It is fairly fast and can outrun most enemies.

**Small Mobile Laser Platform**

This has similar abilities to the large mobile laser platform, but is lighter and faster and can only drill soft and medium rock.

**Small Truck**

The fastest land-based vehicle with a storage space for one crystal.

**Granite Grinder**

Capable of negotiating the bumpiest of terrain and can break cave walls by repeated ramming and drilling them, creating a sort of hammer action.

**Small Helicopter**

Capable of transporting only the pilot but needs fuel. It has a turbo action for very fast speed and is excellent for flying across difficult terrain, e.g. water or lava. Due to its flying height and turbo jets it is very difficult for monsters to attack it in flight.

**Chrome Crusher**

?????????????????

Electric Fences

An electric fence will not have 'force-fields' between fences, but act as powered conductors which shoot bolts of lightning down to units in close proximity. Spiders and scorpions (or Rock Raiders) getting too close will get zapped!

ALIEN LIFEFORMS

There are many weird and wonderful creatures populating the underground caverns of the Rock Raiders universe. Here's a sample of them...

**Rock Monster**

A very powerful land-based enemy that will punch vehicles and buildings or stamp its feet, causing earth tremors which can topple even Granite Grinders. Once disturbed, Rock Monsters head straight for any unit, vehicle or building in the vicinity and ram into it; as they are made of rock hitting things causes no damage to themselves. Vehicles take more damage depending on which side is hit. Some sides, e.g. the front of the bulldozer, are well protected against attacks (although not totally invulnerable)

Ice Monster



This creature has similar abilities to the Rock Monster but as it is lighter in weight it cannot cause earth tremors. It can however freeze Rock Raiders or their vehicles in a tomb of ice with its frosty breath. If a vehicle is encased in ice it will require fully de-frosting before becoming operational again.

Lava Monster

This creature lives in the lava and will fire jets or balls of molten rock at anything that comes close to its domain. This is a very dangerous creature and can move through the lava very rapidly, often laying in ambush for unsuspecting victims.

Large Spiders

These are very fast insects which can spit web over short distances. They tend to ambush Rock Raiders by surrounding and immobilizing their vehicles with their sticky web.

Rock Whale

The rock whale is a large, lumbering oaf of a creature, which slowly walks around the level. It often stops for a sleep in the most awkward of places and can cause delays forcing the Rock Raiders to use alternative routes, which often means drilling or digging around it. However, if provoked it can attack using its body as a battering ram.

The Rock Whale is indestructible but if bumped into or zapped with a gun, it will slowly lift up onto its stumpy legs and waddle slowly away. If the Rock Raider keeps 'zapping' it then it will keep moving, otherwise it will settle down again. Shooting at its head will cause it to turn, so Rock Raiders can theoretically 'herd' them out of the way.

Rock whales can move through water but they sink, although this does make a nice impromptu bridge.

Scabby Scavenger

This mischievous creature steals crystals and even wheels from vehicles. He usually gets bored with his booty and will often drop it nearby and then go off to find something else of interest.



Slugs

Slugs act like small battering rams. They often work in packs but, due to their weight, they inflict only minimal damage on large vehicles. That said, a sustained attack can be quite devastating for small vehicles.

Scorpions, Snakes & Bats



These creatures are harmless to vehicles, but pose a real threat to any Rock Raiders on foot. If they sense a Rock Raider in the open they will head straight for him and bump into him, causing damage, and then jump back. They will then attack again.

Fortunately they are slower moving than a Rock Raider, and can be pushed or frozen with the guns or scared away by a dynamite explosion. If they get too close to an electric fence they will get zapped.

OTHER HAZARDS

The perils that the Rock Raiders must overcome are many and varied...

Spiders Web

This slimy, sticky substance will rapidly bring even the biggest vehicle to a halt. If encountered, the Rock Raider has to go out on foot and clear away the web by shooting it. This is very dangerous, as where there's web there's often spiders too...

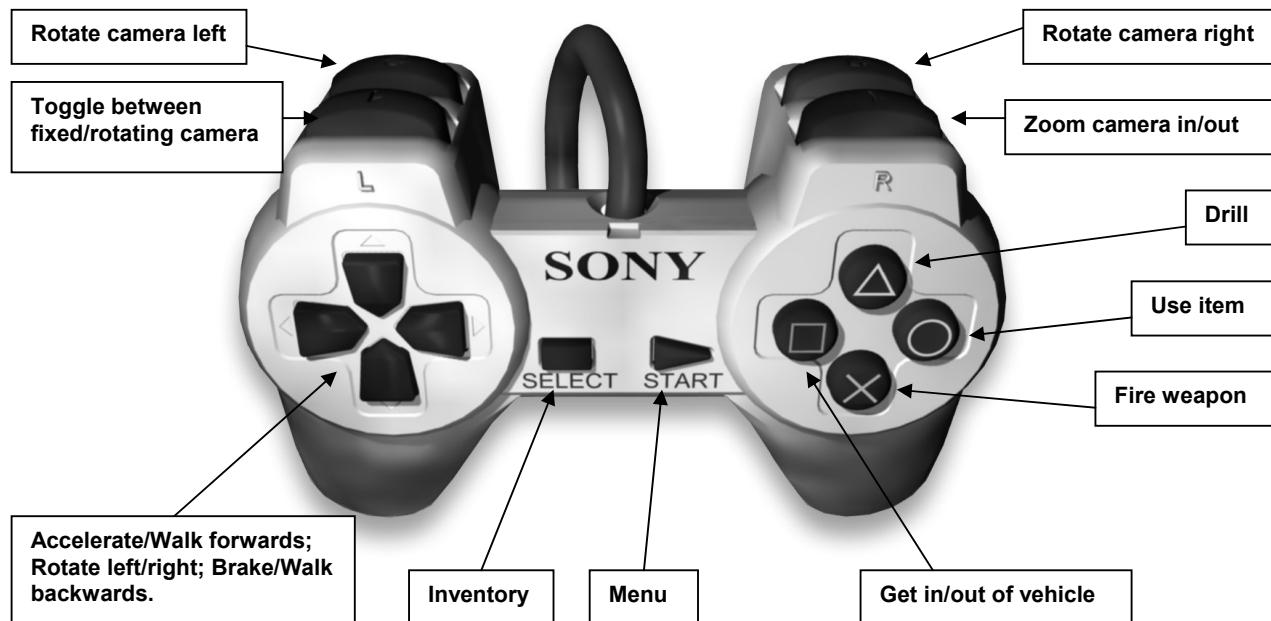
Lava Flows

Lava has a tendency to flow, and in some missions the player will have a frantic race against time to rescue Rock Raiders and their vehicles before they're swallowed up by the creeping molten mess.



JOYPAD CONTROLS

This is the default control pad configuration for Rock Raiders on the PlayStation. The player has total freedom to configure the pad via the options menu at any time. The game is also fully compatible with the analogue pad.



EXAMPLE LEVEL 1 MISSION OBJECTIVE:

The cargo ship has very little power left. It desperately needs power crystals to energise the life support systems. As a highly trained Rock Raider you have been chosen to be teleported down to the planet and find the ten energy crystals needed for the life support systems. The planet's magnetic storms have caused chaos with the teleportation pads so you will have to find your vehicle when you arrive. You have only three minutes before the all the cargo ship's energy is completed depleted.



Level Start.

The Rock Raider has been teleported into a cavern. He can run around freely. The player can see the small digger is just behind a cave wall. If the Rock Raider runs to a nearby drill-able cave wall and presses the 'X' button whilst moving forward, the Rock Raider starts drilling the wall. Once the wall collapses the Rock raider is able to jump into the small digger and drive. The small digger is good at digging soft soil and by driving to drill-able walls and pressing 'X' it can dig through the wall. If power crystals are found during the rock fall, they fly into the air and fall on the ground moments later they teleport up to the cargo ship.

On this level, there are small spiders that do not harm the vehicle but may do some harm to the Rock Raider if they touch him.

** IGNORE FOR NOW...

EXAMPLE LATER LEVEL MISSION SETTING:

The Rock Raiders are hard at work mining the crystals in a remote cavern when a nearby eruption of lava is detected. The player is instructed to evacuate the area as quickly as possible.

MISSION OPTIONS

Where possible we would like to offer the player a choice of different methods for completing the level.

Nearby are two vehicles: one is a hoverboard and the other a granite grinder. It is up to the player to select the most appropriate vehicle, and it is then a race against time to see if the player can race through the tunnels to safety before the lava flow reaches him

The Lava will be eroding down the tunnel at a steady rate, the map will have a wide system of tunnels which if he selects the hoverboard then he will have to weave a longer route between the caves and tunnels.



The Hoverboard has a distinct 'slide' due to its hover powers and a high degree of skill will be needed to keep it from sliding into the walls which will slow it down and may cause irreparable damage. At certain points the player will drive into a dead end cavern, however we will position an unmanned granite grinder which the player can opt to stop and use this to drill an exit to an adjacent cave, but this will cost him time!

The granite grinder will be able to dig straight through the walls, but the player will have to choose the shortest routes (thinnest walls) and which caverns to go to. As the Granite grinder is slow, if he enters a cavern with another granite grinder in then he will be faster to abandon his current machine and run across the level to take control of the new granite grinder.

The levels will all be accurately timed so the pressure is on to keep moving as fast as possible. Along the routes, there will be the occasional Crystal, which a player who has managed to get slightly ahead may want to collect for an additional bonus.

LEVEL. MISSION OBJECTIVE:

The base is under attack from Rock Monsters. It has no power for the laser defences to work , a small mobile laser platform is available and you must defend the base by scaring the RM away, until a new supply of energy crystals are flown in.

Level Start.

There is a small base sitting in a large cavern. RM come out of nearby walls, start to gather rocks and throw them at the weakened base. The player is at the other end of the map inside a MLP and must negotiate a maze like labyrinth of tunnels until he reaches the base. Once at the base, the player must drive the MLP around the base warding off RM using the laser turret on top of the MLP. After 5 mins, a helicopter lands with energy crystals and the base defences are now powered again and the mission is complete.

LEVEL . MISSION OBJECTIVE:

Due to a volcanic eruption, one of the RR bases is literally sinking into the lava. As an expert RR pilot you must rescue the RR mining team and take them to safety. The base can be teleported to safety but if any of the RR team are forced to teleport and use the remaining energy crystals then the base will be lost in the lava forever.

Start Level

You are in a cavern with no vehicles, you must drill your way out and locate the Tunnel Transporter. It is hidden in a cavern further away. If you can locate the small digger, this will aid you ability to drill faster and hence find the



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Tunnel Transporter quicker. Once it is found, the player must fly it around and locate the island base, surrounded by the lava. The player must then land the craft and rescue the RR team, by lifting them off and dropping them off one at a time. Once all the men are safely off, the base teleports away and the mission is complete.